

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for a data network system for responding to a communication message, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a communication message directed to a target device from an originating device, wherein the communication message includes an originating identification associated with the originating device ~~and a target identification associated with the target device;~~

retrieving configuration data of the target device ~~based on the target identification, the configuration data~~ including a plurality of classes and a plurality of canned replies associated with the plurality of classes;

determining whether the target device is available for interactive communication with the originating device;

identifying an originating class of the originating device from the plurality of classes and a canned reply associated with the originating class based on the originating identification;

routing the communication message to the target device if the target device is available for interactive communication with the originating device; and

sending the canned reply to the originating device if the target device is unavailable for interactive communication with the originating device.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the interactive communication is conducted in real-time between an originating user of the originating device and the target user of the target device.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining includes the step of detecting whether an instant messaging application of the target device is active.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of configuring the canned reply by the target device before the step of receiving the communication message from the originating device.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of sending the canned reply to the originating device includes the step of withholding the communication message from the target device.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether rules for configuration of the originating device exist.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising the steps of routing a first canned reply to the originating device if the target device is in at least one classification of devices, and routing a second canned reply to the originating device if the target device is outside of the at least one classification of devices.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether rules for configuration of the target device exist.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of routing a first canned reply to the originating device if a location of the target device is within a defined area, and routing a second canned reply to the originating device if the location of the target device is outside of the defined area.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of retrieving status information of at least one of the originating device and the target device, wherein the step of determining whether the target device is available for interactive communication includes the step of comparing the status information against the configuration data to determine whether the target device is available for interactive communication.

11. (Previously Presented) A data network system for responding to a communication message, the data network system comprising:

a messaging server for communicating with a plurality of client devices, the messaging server being effective to receive a communication message directed to a target device from an originating device, retrieve a plurality of classes and a plurality of canned replies associated with the target device, identify an originating class of the originating device from the plurality of classes and a canned reply associated with the originating class based on the originating device, and send the canned reply to the originating device if the target device is unavailable for interactive communication with the originating device.

12. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the messaging server proxy is incorporated within the messaging server.

13. (Original) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the target device includes an instant messaging application that is active.

14. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 11, further comprising a location register coupled to at least one of either the messaging server and the messaging server proxy, the location register being effective to generate a current location of the target device.

15. (Original) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the communication message is withheld from the target device.

16. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the messaging server proxy includes rules for configuration of the originating device.

17. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 16, wherein the messaging server proxy includes a first canned reply that is sent to the originating device if the target device is in at least one classification of devices, and a second canned reply that is sent to the originating device if the target device is outside of the at least one classification of devices.

18. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the messaging server proxy includes rules for configuration of the target device.

19. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 18, wherein the messaging server proxy includes a first canned reply that is sent to the originating device if a location of the target device is within a defined area, and a second canned reply that is sent to the originating device if the location of the target device is outside of the defined area.

20. (Currently Amended) The data network system of claim 11, wherein the messaging server ~~proxy~~ retrieves status information of at least one of the originating device and the target device and compares the status information against the configuration data to determine whether the target device is available for interactive communication.